Inspectoratul Școlar Județean Prahova

OLIMPIADA DE LIMBA ENGLEZĂ, ETAPA LOCALĂ
8 FEBRUARIE, 2025
CLASA a XII-a, SECȚIUNEA B

Varianta 1

- Toate subiectele sunt obligatorii.
- Nu se acordă puncte din oficiu.
- Timpul efectiv de lucru este de 3 ore.

SUBIECTUL A- USE OF ENGLISH (40 points)

I. Read the paragraph below and do the tasks that follow. (10 x2p=20 points).

This book is about the **angst** of normal people, of people like us. It offers an explanation of why we are so much more likely to be miserable than our grandparents, why we are so discontented and self-attacking, why the moments of emotional richness and freedom of our childhood are less frequent, why so many of us feel there is something missing from life. It establishes that, compared with 1950, the general rise in aspirations has **spawned** depression and an epidemic of compulsions like drug abuse, gambling and eating disorders. We compare ourselves obsessively and enviously, corrupting the quality of our inner lives. No sooner do we achieve a goal than we move the goalposts to create a new one, leaving ourselves permanently **depleted**. There is an outbreak of living in the future and a pathological reenactment of the past.

Advanced capitalism makes money out of misery and dissatisfaction, as if it were encouraging us to fill the psychic void with material goods. It can also profit from fostering spurious individualism by encouraging us to define ourselves through our purchases, with ever more precisely marketed products that create a fetishistic concern to have 'this' rather than 'that', even though there is often no significant practical or aesthetic difference. It can even make money from restoring the chemical imbalance in our brains which results from these false ambitions and identities, by selling pills and therapeutic services.

Increased prosperity is the cornerstone of all major political parties' manifestos and yet, if studies of national well-being are to be believed, voters are mistaken in supposing that greater national wealth will be accompanied by greater happiness. Once a society passes beyond a basic level of wealth, anything beyond that makes no difference to overall contentment. Advanced capitalism has made most of us physically better off by meeting biological needs with unprecedented efficiency, but it has actually made us more prone to low-serotonin problems such as depression and aggression.

New disciplines of evolutionary psychology and psychiatry suggest that advanced capitalism does not meet our primordial needs, evolved over millions of years, for status and emotional attachment. Our genes were developed to cope with completely different psychological and technological circumstances than the ones facing us today. For example, most of our adult lives we fight against the problem of being overweight. This a wholly new problem in the history of the world, caused in the first instance by technology creating diverse and abundant foods. Unfortunately, like all animals, humans were designed to assume that food would be scarce and not on the premise that there would be unlimited supplies of highly calorific food available at all times.

A. Answer the following questions: (4x2p=8 points)

1. Why do people feel there is something missing in life?
2. How does capitalism draw on people's misery?
3. In the writer's view, how do political parties aggravate the problem?
4. What does the writer suggest is the defining characteristic of our times regarding people's basic needs?

B. Choose the right synonym: (3x2p=6 points)

1. **angst: a. anger; b. spitefulness; c. anguish; d. parsimony**
2. **spawn: a. increased; b. inspired; c. bred; d. spread**
3. **depleted: a. sad; b. worn-out; c. reduced; d. angry**

C. Rephrase the following sentences so as to preserve the meaning. (3x2p= 6 points)

1.Thanks to Bob, we won the match.

If it…….lost the match.

2.It began to rain almost immediately after our arrival at the resort.

Scarcely……it began to rain.

3.It appears that they sent us the wrong information.

They……..the wrong information

II. Use the word given in brackets to form a word that fits in each gap. (10x1p = 10 points)

For many people, the London Underground is a grim necessity to get from A to B. But for **(1)___(BUD)** author Preethi Nair, it is a source of inspiration. She just published her first novel, Gypsy Masala - a tale she dreamt up whilst commuting on the Metropolitan Line. 'Have you observed people on the tube?' she asks **(2)___(ENTHUSE).** 'Everyone is in their own little world. I just used to sit there and imagine what kind of lives they led.' Gypsy Masala charts the adventures and **(3)___(INNER)** thoughts of three members of an Indian family living in London, as they search for happiness. 'It is a story about following your dreams,' says Preethi, who gave up her high-pressure job as a **(4)___ (CONSULT)** in order to go in **(5)___(PURSUE)** of her ambition of becoming a writer. 'It was a big risk but it was definitely the right decision in terms of peace of mind and **(6)___ (CONTENT)** " she explains. Preethi was born in a small village in the Indian state of Kerala and moved to London with her parents at the age of three. She says the striking contrast in cultures made a **(7)___(LAST)** impression and is reflected in her story, which flits between the suburbs of London and **(28)___(FAR)** India. Many of the scenes in the book are based on the place where she was born and spent long summer holidays. 'It is a tiny village that is lost in time. There is still no **(9)___(RUN)** water and it is quite difficult to get to. It is completely **(30)___(TOUCH)** , and so beautiful,' she says.

III. Read the text below and think of the word which best fits in each gap. Use only one word in each gap. (5x2=10 points)

The *SS Great Britain*, designed by the engineer Isambard Brunnel, revolutionised ship design when it was launched in1843. It was of 1.____ an innovative design that only 50 passengers were courageous enough to buy tickets for the first journey to New York. The ship had a long 2.____ star-crossed working life. In 1846 it ran aground in Northern Ireland. 3.___ of the 180 passengers was injured, and a group of clergymen conducted a service to 4.___ their nerves. The ship lay on the beach for a year until Brunnel 5.___ devised a rescue which proved to be so expensive that it bankrupted the vessel's operators.

SUBIECTUL B- INTEGRATED SKILLS (60 points)

I Read the text below and do the tasks that follow.

Newspapers have dominated sports writing in Britain for years, and have produced their own totem figures and doyens. But ten years ago, a new player entered the game. This was the phenomenon of men's magazines; monthly magazines for men that had actual words in them - words for actually reading. GQ was the pioneer and, in my totally unbiased opinion as the long-term author of the magazine's sports column, it leads the way still, leaving the rest panting distantly in its wake.

Sport, is of course, a blindingly obvious subject for a men's magazine - but it could not be tackled in a blindingly obvious way. Certainly, one of the first things GQ was able to offer was a new way of writing about sport, but this was not so much a cunning plan as a necessity. The magazine was doomed, as it were, to offer a whole new range of freedoms to its sportswriters. Heady and rather alarming freedoms. Freedom of vocabulary was simply the most obvious one and, inevitably, it appealed to the schoolboy within us. But space and time were the others, and these possibilities meant that the craft of sportswriting had to be reinvented.

Unlike newspapers, a magazine can offer a decent length of time to research and to write. These are, you would think, luxuries - especially to those of us who are often required to read an 800-word match report over the telephone the instant the final whistle has gone. Such a discipline is nerve-racking, but as long as you can get it done at all, you have done a good job. No one expects a masterpiece under such circumstances. In some ways the

ferocious restrictions make the job easier. But a long magazine deadline gives you the disconcerting and agoraphobic freedom to research, to write, to think.

To write a piece for a newspaper, at about a quarter of the massive GQ length, you require a single thought. The best method is to find a really good idea, and then to pursue it remorselessly to the end, where ideally you make a nice joke and bale out stylishly. If it is an interview piece, you look for a few good quotes, and if you get them, that's your piece written for you. For a longer piece, you must seek the non-obvious. This is a good quality in the best of newspaper writing, but an absolute essential for any writer who hopes to complete the terrifying amount of words that GQ requires. If you write for GQ you are condemned to try and join the best. There is no other way.

GQ is not restricted by the same conventions of reader expectation as a newspaper. You need not worry about offending people or alienating them; the whole ethos of the magazine is that readers are there to be challenged. There will be readers who would find some of its pieces offensive or even impossible in a newspaper, or even in a different magazine. But the same readers will read the piece in GQ and find it enthralling.

1) What does the writer imply in the second paragraph?
- A. GQ magazine contains articles that are well worth reading.
- B. Some of the more recent men's magazines are unlikely to survive.
- C. The standard of sportswriting in newspapers has improved in recent times.
- D. He is in a position to give an objective view of sportswriting in magazines.

2) Why were sportswriters for GQ given new freedoms?
- A. Some restrictions of newspaper writing do not apply to writing for GQ.
- B. The magazine's initial plans for its sports articles proved unrealistic.
- C. Notions about what made good sports journalism were changing.
- D. The writers that it wanted to employ demanded greater freedom.

3) What does the writer say about the amount of time allowed for producing articles?
- A. The best articles are often produced under great pressure of time.
- B. Having a long time to produce an article encourages laziness.
- C. Writers are seldom satisfied by articles produced in a hurry.
- D. Having very little time to produce an article can be an advantage.

4) Why can't writers for GQ use the same methods as writers for newspapers?
- A. Articles in GQ are not allowed to consist mainly of interviews.
- B. They want to be considered better than writers for newspapers.
- C. Writers for newspapers do not have so much space to fill.
- D. They've been told to avoid the conventions of newspaper writing.

5) What does the writer say in the last paragraph about certain pieces in GQ?
- A. They will create enormous controversy.
- B. They unintentionally upset some of its readers.
- C. They are a response to demand from readers.
- D. They are a good fit for the GQ reader.

(5x2=10 points)

II. Starting from the text above which emphasises the efforts of youngsters who strive to make a difference, write a *proposal* on the following topic:

You would like to start a fitness programme at the college where you are a student. You have decided to send a proposal to the principal, asking for permission and practical assistance. Include the following: why it would be beneficial, what sort of programme you would like to begin with and what support, practical and financial, you would need.

Write your proposal in 250-280 words in an appropriate style. **50 points**